

The Privilege of Prayer

How God speaks to us:

- ✦ Nature
- ✦ Revelation
- ✦ Providence
- ✦ Influence of Holy Spirit

What is prayer? How do we speak to God?

- ✦ The opening of our heart to God as a friend
- ✦ Prayer enables us to receive God
- ✦ Prayer brings us up to God

“In order to have spiritual life and energy, we must have actual intercourse with our heavenly Father. Our minds may be drawn out toward Him; we may meditate upon His works, His mercies, His blessings; but this is not, in the fullest sense, communing with Him. In order to commune with God, we must have something to say to Him concerning our actual life.” SC 93

“...If the Saviour of men...felt the need of prayer, how much more should feeble, sinful mortals feel the necessity of fervent, constant prayer.” SC 93

“Our heavenly Father waits to bestow upon us the
fullness of His blessing.” SC 94

Consequences of neglect

- ✦ The darkness of the evil one encloses those who neglect to pray
- ✦ The whispered temptations of the enemy entice into sin those who neglect prayer
- ✦ By neglecting prayer, we are in danger of growing careless and of deviating from the right path

“...prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock
heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless
resources of Omnipotence” SC 94

Conditions to answered prayer

- ✦ We feel our need of help from Him
- ✦ “If we regard iniquity in our hearts, if we cling to any known sin, the Lord will not hear us; but the prayer of the penitent, contrite soul is always accepted.” SC 95

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

2 Chronicles 7:14

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Conditions to answered prayer

- ✦ We feel our need of help from Him
- ✦ Penitent and contrite
- ✦ Humble ourselves
- ✦ When all known wrongs are righted
- ✦ Faith
- ✦ A spirit of love and forgiveness in our hearts
- ✦ Perseverance
- ✦ “Pray in the mind and spirit of Jesus, while we believe His promises, rely upon His grace, and work His works.” SC 100

“Unceasing prayer is the unbroken union of the soul with God, so that life from God flows into our life; and from our life, purity and holiness flow back to God.” SC 97

What are three kinds of prayer?

“We should pray in the family circle, and above all we must not neglect secret prayer, for this is the life of the soul. It is impossible for the soul to flourish while prayer is neglected. Family or public prayer alone is not sufficient.” SC 98

- ✦ Family prayer
- ✦ Secret prayer
- ✦ Public prayer

Public prayer should be two minutes or less. The Lord's Prayer cannot be improved upon, is only 66 words long, and takes about 30 seconds.

“Christ impressed upon His disciples the idea that their prayers should be short, expressing just what they wanted, and no more. He gives the length and substance of their prayers, expressing their desires for temporal and spiritual blessings, and their gratitude for the same. How comprehensive this sample prayer! It covers the actual need of all. One or two minutes is long enough for any ordinary prayer.” CCh 292

There is a difference between public and personal prayer. Personal requests should be relegated to personal prayer, whereas public prayer should be focused upon corporate requests and needs.

“We should not come to the house of God to pray for our families unless deep feeling shall lead us while the Spirit of God is convicting them. Generally, the proper place to pray for our families is at the family altar. When the subjects of our prayers are at a distance, the closet is the proper place to plead with God for them. When in the house of God, we should pray for a present blessing and should expect God to hear and answer our prayers.”

Do not use the Lord's name in vain by sprinkling your prayer with His name.

“Reverence should be shown also for the name of God. Never should that name be spoken lightly or thoughtlessly. Even in prayer its frequent or needless repetition should be avoided. ‘Holy and reverend is His name.’ Psalm 111:9. Angels, as they speak it, veil their faces. With what reverence should we, who are fallen and sinful, take it upon your lips!” Ed 243

Nothing too big or small

“Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. ‘The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.’ James 5:11. His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice.” SC 100

“If we thought and talked more of Jesus, and less of self,
we should have far more of His presence.” SC 101

“Although there may be a tainted, corrupted atmosphere around us, we need not breathe its miasma, but may live in the pure air of heaven. We may close every door to impure imaginings and unholy thoughts by lifting the soul into the presence of God through sincere prayer. Those whose hearts are open to receive the support and blessing of God will walk in a holier atmosphere than that of earth and will have constant communion with heaven.”

SC 99

“Let us raise our eyes to the open door of the sanctuary
above, where the light of the glory of God shines in the
face of Christ...” SC 102

“We must gather about the cross. Christ and Him crucified should be the theme of contemplation, of conversation, and of our most joyful emotion. We should keep in our thoughts every blessing we receive from God, and when we realize His great love we should be willing to trust everything to the hand that was nailed to the cross for us.” SC 103

“The soul may ascend nearer heaven on the wings of
praise.” SC 104

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